

2023 Ballot Issue: Parks & Open Space Funding

To view the full text of the Ballot Question, visit LouisvilleCo.gov/Elections

WHAT THE BALLOT ISSUE IS

The ballot issue proposes to:

1. Extend the current sales tax of 0.375 percent, which voters initially approved in 1993 and then voted to extend in 2002 and 2012, for open space and parks purposes.
2. Increase the tax by an additional .125 percent. This increased funding would be dedicated only to open space to acquire, improve, restore, preserve, protect, and maintain open space land and mitigate wildfire risks within open space areas.
3. Continue the total .5 percent tax (5 cents on every \$10) for ten years until 12/31/2033.
4. Utilize the tax solely for parks and open space purposes.

WHAT THE BALLOT ISSUE IS NOT

The ballot issue does not propose to:

1. Increase taxes without a specified purpose.
2. Allocate the funds to other City projects or initiatives beyond open spaces and parks maintenance, operations, and open space land acquisition.
3. Extend the tax beyond the specified 10 year period ending 12/31/2033.

HISTORY OF CURRENT TAX

In 1993, Louisville voters approved a 0.375% sales and use tax increase to create a dedicated funding source for the maintenance of parks, trails, open space, and land acquisition. In 2002 and 2012, voters approved an extension of this tax for another ten years. The tax in its current form will expire at the end of 2023.

The tax, equal to 3.75 cents on every \$10 spent, generates approximately about \$2.85 million per year and is the primary funding source for Open Space and Parks operations. The entire fund balance for the Open Space and Parks Fund is restricted by voters for the acquisition, development, maintenance, and operation of open space, trails, wildlife habitats, wetlands, and parks. The funds are distributed across all aspects of Open Space and Parks including staffing, maintenance, purchasing, service agreements, land acquisition reserves, capital projects, volunteer programs, educational events, and more.

Current Tax

0.375%
(3.75 cents on every \$10)
Current sales tax
will expire 12/31/2023
Estimated Revenue 2.85 M / year

Proposed Tax

0.5%
(5 cents on every \$10)
Proposed sales tax that
would expire 12/31/2033
Estimated Revenue 3.6 M / year



ARGUMENTS FOR THE BALLOT ISSUE:

Primary Funding Source: The Open Space and Parks Sales and Use Tax is the main source of revenue for parks and open space and the discontinuation of this tax could impact service levels and City budget.

Maintaining Current Properties: The tax revenue facilitates the maintenance and enhancement of existing properties and trails, guaranteeing their accessibility and upkeep for both present and future generations.

Fire Mitigation Priority: Allocating more resources to fire mitigation and prevention is crucial to safeguard the City and its public lands from potential wildfire risks.

Enhancing Quality of Life: Parks and open spaces significantly contribute to residents' quality of life by offering areas for outdoor activities, relaxation, and community gatherings.

Land Acquisition Capability: Having available funds allows the City of Louisville to purchase new properties for dedication as open space and parks when opportunities arise.



ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE BALLOT ISSUE:

Financial Strain: Increasing taxes could impose an extra financial burden on individuals and families, potentially affecting household budgets and disposable income.

Adequate Open Space & Parks: The City of Louisville already designates or manages sufficient open space and parks and the acquisition of additional land is unnecessary.

Lack of Detailed Spending Plan: With shifting City priorities and variability of funding, there is not a detailed plan on how the tax revenue will be utilized.

Expiration of Original Tax: The initial tax was designed to last for ten years and it should come to an end as originally planned.

Maintenance Levels Unnecessary: Current maintenance and service levels of parks and open space are not needed and the tax used to fund these services should be eliminated.

HOW IS THE TAX MONEY USED?

The current Open Space and Parks Sales and Use Tax generates approximately about **\$2.85 million per year** and is the main source of funding for the programs and services below.



TRAILS CONSTRUCTION & MAINTENANCE

The City of Louisville manages and maintains approximately 32 miles of both soft and hard surface trails, 25 of which are exclusive to Open Space. These trails connect residents and visitors to open space, parks, and surrounding communities while supporting methods of alternative transportation.

32 MILES OF TRAIL



OPEN SPACE OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE

The City currently has 31 Open Space properties. There are 19 individual properties (649 acres) owned and maintained by the City of Louisville and 12 properties (1,225 acres) jointly owned and maintained with Boulder County Open Space or Lafayette.

2000 ACRES OF OPEN SPACE



OPEN SPACE ACQUISITIONS AND CONSERVATION

The Open Space Mission is to conserve and restore Open Space through land acquisition and management for the protection of natural and cultural resources and provide opportunities for education, volunteering and appropriate passive recreation.

The most recent acquisition was the Mayhoffer Farm Property, which was jointly purchased by Boulder County, Lafayette, and Louisville in 2017. The 165-acre property forms a key part of the rural buffer zone between Lafayette and Louisville and is also locally significant for its history of coal mining and agriculture.



PARK OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE

The Parks Division manages the amenities, programs and services for over 100 individual sites located on 350 acres of designated park land throughout the City. This includes 37 parks, 16 playgrounds, 7 basketball courts, 14 athletic fields, 11 tennis courts, 5 pickleball courts, 1 multipurpose in-line skating rink, and the City skate park.

37 PARKS & 16 PLAYGROUNDS

2023 Open Space & Parks Projects

- Wildfire Hazard & Risk Assessment Plan
- Cattle Grazing on Davidson Mesa
- Goat Grazing on North Open Space
- Coyote Run Trail Resurfacing Project
- Tennis Court Resurfacing
- 104th Street Trail Connection w/ City of Lafayette, CDOT, and Boulder County
- Median Renovation Project
- Joe Carnival Park Enhancement & Playground Replacement
- Meadows Park Enhancement & Playground Replacement
- Community Park Irrigation & Pond Renovation
- Fence Repair & Replacement

Programs & Services

- Bee City Program
- Habitat & Land Management
- Holiday Lights
- Picnic Shelter Reservations
- Mowing
- Ranger Naturalist Program
- Raptor Monitoring
- Open Space Education Events
- Snow Removal
- Trash Removal
- Tree Branch Recycle Site
- Weed Control
- Wildfire Mitigation
- Wildlife Opportunities (fishing, wildlife habitats, birding sanctuaries, etc.)



QUESTIONS?

Visit the City's website at LouisvilleCo.gov/Elections or call us at **303.666.6565**

*This factual summary from the City of Louisville is for informational purposes only and provides arguments both for and against this ballot issue. It is not intended to urge a vote for or against the ballot issue.



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